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**Subject:** EPA Mid-Atlantic Region Headlines - Friday, May 7, 2021

**EPA Mid-Atlantic Region Headlines  
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**\*\*\* DAILY HOT LIST \*\*\***

**Harrisburg Patriot News:** 'A Third-World Problem': 584 Million Gallons Of Harrisburg-Area Wastewater Discharged Untreated In 2020 Capital Region Water discharged 584 million gallons of untreated sewage into the Susquehanna River — 41 percent of all the water that entered the system — in 2020. Last April, while most people were preoccupied with a global pandemic, the Trump-era U.S. Environmental Protection Agency raised an alarm over Capital Region Water's failure to prevent sewer overflows. "Despite the lengthy discussions and analyses undertaken . . . CRW still seems to be struggling with the concept of the [long-term control] plan," the letter reads. The EPA accused the utility of failing to meet various benchmarks and inflating the cost of its mitigation efforts. Capital Region Water, in a June response, denied all of the EPA's allegations...

**State Impact Pennsylvania (NPR):** To cut methane leaks — and maybe work on their image — 2 Pa. gas drillers eye 'responsibly sourced' label Chris Romer believes the natural gas industry has a bit of a brand problem. So, he's directing his passion for solving what he calls "big gnarly problems" toward the gas industry. The former investment banker and Colorado state senator is now focused on climate change and methane leaks as CEO of Project Canary, which monitors and evaluates gas sites...

**Chesapeake Bay Magazine:** Commentary: Cleaning up the Bay - Fifty years of the most complex restoration project ever attempted While I was thinking about everything our beloved Chesapeake Bay has experienced since Chesapeake Bay Magazine began printing in May 1971, my former Chesapeake Bay Foundation colleague Dr. Robin Tyler posted this reminiscence that embodies the changes of the last half-century, kicked off by Hurricane Agnes in 1972: When I was a kid growing up in Princess Anne in the 1960s and '70s, I didn't know what pollution was. We called our home, the Eastern Shore, God's Country. I feel fortunate to have grown up where I did, when I did, with whom I did, to do the things I did...

**Pa. Environment Digest Blog (By PA DEP):** EPA Evaluation Of Plan To Reduce Pollutants No Longer Contained By Conowingo Reservoir Says 'Little Confidence' The Plan Can Be Implemented Without Dedicated Funding On May 6, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency released its evaluation of a draft plan to compensate for more than 6 million pounds of Chesapeake Bay pollutants no longer being trapped in a reservoir behind the Conowingo Dam located on the Susquehanna River just south of the Pennsylvania - Maryland border. The EPA evaluation recognizes that the CWIP financing strategy is still under development, but notes "there is currently little confidence that the CWIP will be fully implemented to meet the necessary nitrogen reductions without dedicated funding mechanisms in place and the commitment from the public sector to provide an initial investment to initiate CWIP implementation."...

**Greenwire:** Audit: EPA must account for cancer risks from 2 key chemicals EPA should launch new reviews of air emission standards for two toxic chemicals to better account for their cancer-causing potential

and to further the pursuit of environmental justice for hundreds of thousands of people, the agency's in-house watchdog said in a wide-ranging report released today. Even though EPA reclassified ethylene oxide as a human carcinogen in 2016 after deeming chloroprene as likely carcinogenic in 2010, the agency has yet to take another look at existing standards for most industrial sources in light of those findings, Inspector General Sean O'Donnell said in the report...

**Federal Soup:** House committee reviews bills aimed at fed workforce reform Six separate bills focused on federal employee reform and policy are being considered by the House Oversight and Reform Committee, Federal Times reports. According to the report on the May 3 committee hearing, the IG Independence and Empowerment Act will give federal Offices of Inspector General more subpoena authority when conducting their internal investigations, while also protecting IGs employment; the Whistleblower Protection Improvement Act and the Federal Employee Access to Information Act would expand federal employee rights to protect against retaliation; and the Periodically Listing Updates to Management Act, the Federal Advisory Committee Transparency Act and the Presidential Records Preservation Act — are all designed to increase public transparency of the inner-workings of federal agencies...

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## PENNSYLVANIA

**Philadelphia Inquirer:** Grass pollen joining the trees to torment Philly allergy sufferers Things just got worse for those allergic to both tree and grass pollen. Levels of both could remain high through the month...

**Philadelphia Inquirer:** Pennsylvania approves private takeover of Roversford sewer system; rates will increase 70% Roversford will net \$9.8 million from the sale to Pennsylvania American, more than three times the borough's typical annual revenue...

**Philadelphia Inquirer:** Electric Cars Are Coming, And Gas Stations Will Have To Adjust Convenience retailers and gasoline stations now have a monopoly in gassing up cars. But that's going to change with the growing sales of electric cars...

**Pittsburgh Post-Gazette:** EQT ventures into northeastern Marcellus with \$2.9 billion deal for Alta Resources Downtown-based natural gas driller EQT Corp. announced a \$2.9 billion acquisition Thursday, expanding its reach into the northeastern part of Pennsylvania. Already the largest natural gas producer in the country, EQT plans to buy Alta Resources Development, which has wells, leases, and pipelines in Bradford, Sullivan, Lycoming, Centre and Clinton counties, some of which are part of a joint venture with and operated by Chesapeake Energy...

**State Impact Pennsylvania (NPR):** Study finds patients near US Steel plant had worse asthma after 2018 fire A new study found residents living near a US Steel plant in the Pittsburgh area experienced worse bouts of asthma and increased their use of breathing aides after a 2018 fire caused elevated air pollution in the area. The Dec. 24, 2018 fire destroyed the pollution controls at US Steel's Clairton Coke Works. For three months, the controls were offline, resulting in large releases of sulfur dioxide, a lung irritant that can make it harder to breathe, especially for people with asthma and other lung conditions...

**Pennsylvania Capital Star:** Biden admin says it will permanently restore migratory bird protections WASHINGTON — The U.S. Interior Department said Thursday that it plans to officially revoke a Trump-era rule that loosened enforcement of a longstanding law to protect migratory birds. The rule put in place by former Interior Secretary David Bernhardt barred government authorities from holding companies liable for environmental violations leading to the deaths of birds protected under the century-old Migratory Bird Treaty Act unless the companies intentionally did so. Some 1,100 bird species are protected...

**Fox 43 Harrisburg:** Lower Susquehanna RiverKeeper, Other Groups File Federal Complaint Over Sewage Overflows From Harrisburg Into Susquehanna River HARRISBURG, Pa. — A clean water advocacy group announced Thursday that they've filed a complaint in federal court demanding that the Environmental Protection Agency and Pennsylvania end Harrisburg's routine piping of raw sewage and stormwater into the Susquehanna River, the biggest tributary of the Chesapeake Bay. The Lower Susquehanna Riverkeeper Association, represented by the Environmental Integrity Project, filed the legal action in the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania...

**Johnstown Tribune-Democrat:** Guest editorial | Pass Yaw bill to help farms get greener Pennsylvania has fallen far behind the pollution reduction goals it has agreed to in the multi-state and federal effort to revive Chesapeake Bay. Other governments that are party to the agreement – Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia – have sued the Environmental Protection Agency for failing to force Pennsylvania to comply with the standards. Even though Pennsylvania does not border the great bay, it is the largest source of freshwater that flows into it...

**Scranton Times-Tribune:** Editorial: Stormwater Management Worth The Cost

**Pa. Environment Digest Blog (By PA DEP):** EPA Evaluation Of Plan To Reduce Pollutants No Longer Contained By Conowingo Reservoir Says 'Little Confidence' The Plan Can Be Implemented Without Dedicated Funding On May 6, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency released its evaluation of a draft plan to compensate for more than 6 million pounds of Chesapeake Bay pollutants no longer being trapped in a reservoir behind the Conowingo Dam located on the Susquehanna River just south of the Pennsylvania - Maryland border. The EPA evaluation recognizes that the CWIP financing strategy is still under development, but notes “there is currently little confidence that the CWIP will be fully implemented to meet the necessary nitrogen reductions without dedicated funding mechanisms in place and the commitment from the public sector to provide an initial investment to initiate CWIP implementation.”...

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## WASHINGTON, D.C.

**Washington Post:** Letter: Mr. Manchin is wrong on D.C. statehood As a resident of D.C., I was deeply alarmed to read the May 1 Metro article “Manchin won’t back statehood bill,” in which Sen. Joe Manchin III (D-W.Va.) asserted incorrectly that D.C. statehood would require a constitutional amendment. It is clear from past practice under U.S. law and a plain reading of the 23rd Amendment that it would take a simple majority (51 percent) for the creation of the state of “Washington, Douglass Commonwealth,” whereas the repeal of the 23rd Amendment could and would be handled separately...

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## DELAWARE

**Delaware Cape Gazette:** Officials highlight Clean Water Bill in Milford U.S. Sen. Tom Carper, chairman of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, joined Rick Duncan, executive director of the Delaware Rural Water Association, and David Baird, National Rural Water Association president, along with representatives from water suppliers throughout Delaware April 23 to highlight the support for the bipartisan Drinking Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Act of 2021. This legislation, the first infrastructure bill advanced by a Senate committee this Congress, will strengthen drinking water and wastewater infrastructure, foster economic growth, enhance the health and well-being of families across the nation, and address environmental justice...

## WEST VIRGINIA

**Charleston Gazette-Mail:** Gayle Manchin sworn in as Appalachian Regional Commission federal co-chair Gayle Manchin was sworn in Thursday as the new federal co-chair of the Appalachian Regional Commission, becoming the first West Virginian to be appointed to the position since the agency's inception in 1965. "This is a big day, and in some ways an overdue day as we prepare to install the first West Virginian to this position," said Tim Thomas, who held the position before Manchin's appointment. "I'm excited to learn what new ideas [Manchin] brings to raise the region and take it to the next rung on the ladder."...

**West Virginia Metro News:** Gorge National Park now has sign LANSING, W.Va. — U.S. Senators Shelley Moore Capito and Joe Manchin unveiled a sign Wednesday for the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve. The ceremony, held at the Canyon Rim Visitors Center at Lansing near Fayetteville, follows the approval last December of the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve Designation Act. It was legislation that redesignates the New River Gorge National River as the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve. The area becomes the 63rd national park in the United States...

**West Virginia Metro News:** Gayle Manchin sworn in as Appalachian Regional Commission co-chairman CHARLESTON, W.Va. — Gayle Manchin was sworn in Thursday as the federal co-chairman of the Appalachian Regional Commission, a week after the U.S. Senate confirmed her nomination. Manchin, the former first lady of West Virginia and wife of Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., is the first West Virginian to serve as the commission's federal co-chairman in the body's 56-year history...

**Cleveland.com:** Travel:Chasing waterfalls at West Virginia's Blackwater Falls State Park

**Associated Press (W. Va.):** West Virginia town receives \$3.3M mine reclamation grant CHARLESTON, W.Va. (AP) — Gov. Jim Justice has announced a \$3.3 million abandoned mine land grant for a central West Virginia town to make improvements to its water system. The federal grant will go toward addressing drinking water safety concerns and making upgrades to the water treatment operation in the Randolph County town of Coalton, also known as Womelsdorf, according to a statement released by the governor's office Tuesday...

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## MARYLAND

**Maryland Matters:** State to Embark on Next Phase of Central Maryland Transit Plan The Maryland Transit Administration and five metro Baltimore jurisdictions announced on Thursday that they are moving forward with their joint pursuit of improved transportation options for the region. MTA and its local partners are moving to the "implementation phase" of the Central Maryland Regional Transit Plan (RTP)...

**Annapolis Patch:** Comment Period Open For Proposed Bay Bridge 3<sup>rd</sup> Span Location The MDTA is accepting comments on an environmental impact study for a proposed third span for the Bay Bridge. Here's how to file comments...

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## VIRGINIA

**Inside Northern Virginia:** Clean the Bay Day morphs into weeklong event for 2021 Sponsored by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and held since 1989, the event will morph into a weeklong event across Virginia running from May 31 to June 5. "This is going to bring people together and result in even more people taking action," said Kristin Webb, who coordinates the effort for the foundation. "From Charlottesville to Richmond to Virginia Beach to Northern Virginia, I can't wait to see reports and photos rolling in of how everyone is doing

their part for our waterways.”...

**Associated Press (Va.):** Pipeline tree stand protesters get jail time, fines CHRISTIANSBURG, Va. (AP) — Two Mountain Valley Pipeline protesters have been sentenced to months in jail and ordered to repay the cost of removing them from tree stands they were chained to along the pipeline’s path. The Roanoke Times reports that Montgomery County General District Court Judge Randal Duncan convicted Alexander Lowe, 24, of Worcester, Massachusetts, and Claire Fiocco, 23, of Dorset, Vermont, on Wednesday of obstructing justice and interfering with Mountain Valley’s property rights...

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## MISCELLANEOUS

**Government Executive:** The Environmental Threat More Immediate Than Climate Change The uptick in earthquakes and volcanic eruptions poses substantial dangers for people and the economy, says an EPA scientist...

**Government Executive:** 5 Things To Know About Supplemental Retirement Benefits Federal workers who are younger than 62 and eligible for an unreduced Federal Employees Retirement System benefit also are eligible for a temporary extra benefit, the FERS annuity supplement. This group includes those who retire under special provisions for law enforcement officers, firefighters and air traffic controllers as well as regular FERS retirees who retire at their minimum retirement age with 30 or more years of service or at age 60 or 61 with at least 20 years of service. Those who retire under Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (also known as “early out” offers) are entitled to begin receiving the FERS supplement at their MRA.

**Bloomberg News:** EPA Watchdog Calls for Review of Cancer-Causing Emission Sources The EPA needs new reviews of cancerous chemicals that likely affect nearly a half million people in order to meet environmental justice goals, the agency’s investigation arm said Thursday...

**Bloomberg News:** Carbon Capture Key to 2050 Climate Goal, Energy Chief Says Removing carbon dioxide from fossil fuels is a critical part of the Biden administration’s overall goal of reaching net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm told House appropriators Thursday...

**Greenwire:** Biden’s conservation plan puts WOTUS in the crosshairs A vision the Biden administration laid out today for preserving 30% of the nation’s land and water by 2030 is already fueling calls for EPA to reverse a controversial Trump-era water rule that rolled back federal protection for wetlands and streams. Biden officials today released “America the Beautiful,” a framework for its ambitious conservation plan they said is locally led and nationally scaled (see related story). Over the next decade, the program — relying heavily on voluntary actions — will leverage ongoing restoration efforts with states, tribes and private landowners to protect large swaths of land and water...

**Greenwire:** Biden admin unveils massive conservation plan The Biden administration today unveiled the framework for its ambitious conservation plan, emphasizing the role of “voluntary efforts” by states, private landowners and tribal nations over an expansion of the federal estate. The 24-page report also rebrands the proposal often called “30x30” — for its goal of setting aside 30% of the nation’s lands and waters by 2030 — into a 10-year “America the Beautiful” campaign. The document offers broad strokes about how to reach its aim, leaving for later some key details...

**Greenwire:** Climate, marine, chemicals scientists up for top award Some of the federal government’s top scientists on climate change, marine life and chemicals are under consideration for a prestigious civil service award. The Partnership for Public Service announced this week 29 finalists for its annual Samuel J. Heyman

Service to America Medals. The "Sammies," thought of as the Oscars for the civil service, are given to federal employees each year who have made outstanding contributions to the country's well-being...

**Inside EPA:** Biden EPA Faces Pressure To End Debate On Regulating AFO Emissions The Biden administration is facing pressure to resolve a long-running debate over whether and how EPA should regulate animal feeding operations' (AFOs) emissions of hazardous gases, criteria air pollutants and the greenhouse gas methane, with some states and Congress grappling with either pursuing or blocking AFO air rules...

**Inside EPA:** EPA Clashes With OIG Over Call To Tighten Emission Rules For Two HAPs EPA is clashing with its Office of Inspector General (OIG) over a new OIG report that urges the agency to tighten its emissions rules for the hazardous air pollutants (HAPs) ethylene oxide (EtO) and chloroprene, rejecting what it sees as overly prescriptive rulemaking recommendations and avoiding any firm promise to tighten its regulations...

**Federal Soup:** WH Task Force to develop ways to facilitate union organizing, bargaining... The White House has launched a new push to help the nation's workers—including federal employees—who want to join, or make better use of, employee unions—an effort particularly aimed at improving awareness, easing collective bargaining and generally improving policies and practices as permitted under established law. In an Executive Order, signed last week, the president created a new White House Task Force on Worker Organizing and Empowerment, to develop and facilitate the improvements...

**The Intercept:** Inspector General rebukes EPA for failing to protect communities from carcinogenic air pollution THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY'S Office of Inspector General issued a report today taking the agency to task for its failure to protect communities from chloroprene and ethylene oxide. Both chemicals are carcinogenic air pollutants and pose particular risks to people living near plants that emit them...

**New York Times:** Biden Promises to 'Build Back Better.' Some Climate Experts See Trouble. Critics say the administration hasn't defined a clear climate resilience strategy and has been slow to fill key jobs to coordinate that work...

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